2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

Further enquiries may reveal that this is only a section of a larger village, possibly a hundred or more yards away.

The boundaries of a village may not always be clear. Clusters of huts which are part of one village may be physically nearer another, but in the minds of the Yao, who see not only the huts but also the social relationships of the people occupying them, there is no confusion at all. As a general rule the villages are fairly compact and clearly demarcated from others, and even strangers have no difficulty in recognising the autonomy of the group which is expressed in many different ways. MacDonald recorded that formerly a headman performed a certain amount of ritual which symbolized the unity of the village.[1] Much of this has fallen away, but the unity remains.

The ritual surrounding the foundation of a new village bears testimony to its persisting political significance. In this ritual the unity of the group, against other similar groups, including the village from which it has sprung, is expressed. On first arrival at a new village site the men build grass sheds, beginning with that of the headman. That night the headman pours a cone of sacred flour at the root of a tree on the site, and asks the spirits of his ancestors whether the site is propitious. Early next morning he examines the cone to see the answer. If a side of the cone has collapsed it does not augur well and another site is selected. If the cone is still whole it is taken that the spirits acquiesce, and permanent huts can be started. The headman then goes into the bush to find medicines[2] which he mixes with groundbeans. That night, with the medicated groundbeans in the hut, the headman has intercourse with his wife. In the morning those who are not sexually active come to the headman's grass shed to drink some water in which the medicine has been steeped and eat some of the medicated beans with a little porridge, which the headman's wife has prepared from the sacred flour. This medicine is called 'the medicine to strengthen the village' (*mtiva wakulimbika mwai*). Until then all members of the village should have been continent but after this sexual relationships may be resumed. The object of the medicine is to prevent those

[1] See pp. 31-2.

[2] *Mkhangwa* and *chisu*, two plants commonly used for protection against [illegible]. See I.n., p. 111.

3:Stenmo D-5 (in. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

toward the east. After adjusting the body in its place, the adult would tear open the shroud over the ear, and pour on to the place some powdered beads to be used by the dead man as money in the hereafter. Except in the case of chiefs, no objects were buried with the dead, contrary to Macdonald's description[1] of the Anyanja. The pole on which the body had been carried to the grave was broken into bits and together with any stick that had been used to measure the body for the cave, was placed in the grave. The opening into the chamber was then closed by a mat fastened over it by pegs and supported by pieces of wood. The earth shovelled out of the well, pushed the first earth backward into the grave with their elbows, after which the rest of the earth was shovelled in quickly, and a heap made at the surface. The ground about this mound was swept clean with a branch of leaves by some one walking backward so that no footprints were left; the branch of leaves was thrown on top of the mound. No medicine was put in the grave, nor were the household utensils placed on the mound, as Macdonald states concerning the Anyanja.[2]

For some years past, the type of grave made among the Yao has resembled that of the Anyanja,[3] a long pit with a chamber scooped out along the whole length of one side. In this, the corpse is placed in a fully extended position so that it lies on its back with the feet toward the east. With this exception, the account given above holds good for the present day. The method of suspending the corpse in a mat slung on forked sticks within the grave, mentioned in *Africana*,[4] is not found among the Amachinga Yao.

On the way back to the village, two smile lead, followed by the men, the women, and lastly, by the other smile. First, all wash, the men upstream, the women downstream; no one may wash another's back. The hoes used in digging the grave are also washed; hoes are never washed on any other occasion.

During the funeral, some responsible old man is left in charge of the village with several younger men to assist him. Just before the return of the funeral party is expected, the old man sends one of the younger men to set medicine at the side of the path along which the mourners will pass. This medicine is made from the bark of the *mpingo* tree and is used for purification; it is placed in a shard. Each person as he arrives at the spot squats down, dips the little finger of each hand into the medicine, and passes the fingers between the little toe and the third toe of the corresponding foot. The last mourner throws any remaining medicine into the bush. As they near the village, a gun is fired and wailing is resumed for a few minutes, after which it ceases altogether. The old man who has been left in charge of the village always inquires whether all has gone well at the interment.

That evening, the time is passed in singing *chinkhoka*.[5] All those who attended the burial, sleep in the village, and if the deceased's relatives can afford to provide the necessary food, all remain in the village for a number of days equal to the period which elapsed between death and burial. Sometimes, when burial was long delayed, the returning party

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, p. 185.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Stenmo, "Some account of British Central Africa," op. cit., p. 218.
[4] Macdonald, op. cit., p. 186.
[5] This notes, p. 207, 208.

759 A sword may be met with under different circumstances. An educated native told me of his experience one night when riding a bicycle back to a township where he was employed. Coming along a recently-hoed path with his lamp alight, he became aware of the presence of something in the bush in front and at the side of him. Suddenly his lamp was smashed and he was left in darkness, while something pushed him over so hard that he fell off his cycle. Picking himself up, he started to wheel his cycle on, when there appeared on the path in front, figures who, rubbing their hands together to produce a phosphorescent glow, held them up in front of the boy's face. He was, however, not molested further, and coming to a group of huts he knew, he went in and made inquiries as to the cause of his experience and was promptly told that there was a man living in a hut near the spot on the path where they had encountered who was supposed to be sword. Such a story is given for what it is worth. The boy was about twenty-two years old, a highly educated native with an intelligent appreciation of the worth of superstition.

Some sword demonstrations can have no object but to strike terror and keep up the prestige of the sword class. Mr. Maggridge wrote me, "A boy of mine was certainly attacked and squeezed about the neck by a man whom he described as naked, huge, and slightly luminous, on the road at the back of my house in Shinjore. The boy was strolling up and down in the dusk and had nothing about him to provoke robbery; he was almost choked before he managed to let out a yell which determined his assailant to let him go. He was not a timid boy and no theory of personal spite was supportable. I thought and still think that the motive was to show that even the President's servant twenty yards from the President's house was not safe from sword." It seems possible that some natives with intent to rob had pretended to be sword but recognizing that their victim was likely to cause trouble, they went no further.

[824] It is said that the phosphorescence is produced by rubbing in the hands two vegetable substances from local trees and that this is the method the sword adopt to announce their presence.

759 Poison Ordeal. As I have said above, when anyone sickens or dies, the illness or death 675 is likely to be considered the work of some one who is sword, and action will be taken by the relatives to find him out. The proceedings in such a case where witchcraft is suspected will now be briefly sketched; though I give an account of a case from beginning to end as if it occurred at the present time, it must be understood that the giving of sword, the ordeal poison, is now much less common than formerly. A man becomes ill in some village and does not get better, so the matter of his ill is considered. The sick man's relatives or friends go to the [819] his native and approach the subject indirectly by asking him his advice about a number of imaginary cases; they may say, "Things have been stolen from our house." The late one sent and the matter replies, "Yes, you have not come to see me about that." This may go on for hours before the facts of the case proper are mentioned to him. Finally, they tell him that one of their relatives is ill in the village, the late one consulted and advice is given

Ilyani is a love potion. Men are often anxious that women should ask them for love (*kwapula*). A man seeing a woman whom he fancies, takes up some of the dust where she has trodden and mixing this with medicine puts it in his hair. If he must not again, though he takes no notice of her, she will come to him.

When crops are harvested, a layer of the cereal is laid at the bottom of the corn-store, and some, which consists of medicines contained in the skull of an ounie from the body of a still-born infant, is then put in and the store filled. In this way, he who has only a small garden may be sure that his grain will last a long time. Similar medicine is put in gardens with the first seine to insure heavy crops. A man on the approach of the planting season should never give away seed to anyone until his own seed is put in or it may bring bad luck to his crop. This is evidently a superstition arising from the fact that if he gives seed away, he may not have enough left to raise a crop sufficient to support his family. Some people are mentioned "lucky at planting pumpkins, other people when they plant, reap only watery pumpkins." A man, therefore, will often ask one of the lucky people to plant his pumpkins for him. My hospital boy always got the seeds to plant his pumpkins.

A man wishing to become a person of importance, with a village of his own, takes a medicine made from a certain tree and then builds his hut in a new place, hoping people will flock to him. The tree is known as *shakamishi*. Another medicine, taken in the belief that people will flock to a man in consequence, is made from the bush called *mwale*. Cf. Ibala placed on the threshold to attract visitors.

Conjuring. There are other performances akin to magic in the eyes of the natives, which I have never had the opportunity of witnessing but which would appear to be of the nature of juggling or possibly hypnotism; some resemble the tricks of jugglers, others are more like some of the performances in India. I naturally supposed that they had been learned from men at the coast (Swahili), but I am assured that they belong to the Tao themselves.

Kasolonje, a Tao of Chimalenda, well-known as dancer and *Chipapa*, after some preliminary dancing, stands still and is covered by a cloth; when the cloth is again removed, he is discovered with a number of squealing puppies held in his bite cloth, which he then hands round. He begins to dance again and the persons to whom the puppies have been given watch him and then find they are holding earthenware, not puppies. Or wood-fish are handed round and the people find they are holding women's diapers.

Another trick often performed by Kasolonje was the burial of a man in the ground, covered up completely with earth; at the sounding of the drums the buried man arose running in from the back of the watching crowd.

Kasonga, a Tao of Mukenye's, priest, and medicine man, after an *Chipapa* ceremony used to put on his red blanket and walk over the hot embers of an enormous fire in the village open space. He admitted that he smeared himself with medicine and an eyewitness told me that when he put his feet on the hot logs, it caused a sizzling sound.

Thegulupo was another well-known performer; he used to do the same tricks as Kamkanje. He also was possessed of an elastic skin and is said to have been able "to tie his own together behind till both of his head."

Mjambatsinja, a Tau of Mlanda, is a man with considerable resource. He is said to be able to produce a lion at will from a lion's tail and skin. He would offer to show this if there were any known enough to go through with it. On a moonlight night, he would expose on the ground in a cleared space near a village the tail of a lion laid across also in a piece of split bamboo. At the split end of the bamboo, he would place a lion's skin and round this, a woman's hair braid in position by three bamboo pegs, around which he would draw a circle of mkapasi flour. Everyone would then withdraw to a hut in which the women were to take place. After an hour or so, Mjambatsinja would send some one out to inspect the lion's tail where probably all would be found intact. He might then pretend to be uninterested and sleepy and suggest that some one should go out again in half an hour. Sooner or later, a man would come back, having found the tail gone; then everyone would go out to see what had happened. The pegs would be found in place but the tail and skin gone. A little way off, the split piece of bamboo would be found and further still a braid or two from the woman's hair. These, Mjambatsinja would pick up, and leaving a little trail of flour on their way, all returned to the hut, while he whistled as if calling some one. Suddenly they would be aroused by the sound as of a lion breaking against the hut walls, as the beasts are known to do, and next, a loud roar. Mjambatsinja would immediately open the door half-way so that the people could look out into the moonlight and there, a little way off, would be the lion. It would immediately advance towards the house and then, as it prepared to spring for the door, Mjambatsinja would offer it some of the flour in his left hand, armed with a stirring-stick, native, in his right hand. As the lion landed, he would strike it on the head with the stick and be cast behold! the lion would vanish and the tail and skin would be found in his hand.

Superstitions. Scattered throughout these notes, particularly under Umoni and Dreams, mention is made of practices which show a strong belief in superstition. Below are given a number of minor beliefs, and it is interesting to compare these with many well-known superstitions in other parts of the world.

1. A child who cuts the upper incisor teeth first will be unlucky. Such children used to be killed by the Tau. (Other tribes make medicine against the threatened ill-luck.)

2. A woman with polydactylism may not take food out of a cave-store. Otherwise the stock of corn will not last long. (Rudimentary sixth fingers are not uncommon.)

3. An insect called chiguwo must which lives in the mud at the bottom of ponds. If killed causes the water to dry up.

4. If a boy puts a water-spider in the armpit when learning to swim, he will learn quickly.

5. A man wishing to prevent rain falling on a day he is making a journey, will wrap some of the leaves of the omomoti tree in his bale cloth and go without drinking.

3:Siamese B-5 (ca. 1912) 1932 FT7 Tan FT7

Some and others, at intervals swaying their bodies from side to side and clapping their hands. Kamoga then ordered all to go and bathe, men and women separately. As they returned from the stream, rain began to fall.

Intercession on behalf of the sick may be made, especially by anyone who is likely to be accused of causing the illness by witchcraft.[1] The man standing with arms outstretched, downwards and a little in front of his body, the hands replete, takes some water in his mouth and discharges it in a stream on the ground, (probably as a sign of purification of his tongue), and then invoking "all the spirits above," asks that they will intercede to restore health to the sick man and bear witness to his own innocence of any wish to do the sick man injury. *Ka-pupa* is the word meaning to offer sacrifice and prayer.

Harvesting and hunting are occasions when sacrifices may be offered. It was formerly the custom for the chief to determine the day on which harvesting of millet should begin. On the day appointed, a big drum was beaten in the village and word passed round, then everyone would go down to his garden, gather a head of millet, and bring it back to the village where it was all handed over to the chief's headwife. After drying and threshing, a little of the grain was laid at the grave of an old chief by one of the reigning chief's advisers, the remainder being again distributed to all the people gathered together in the village meeting-place, who ate it raw. After this ceremony, harvesting began.

In passing through a millet garden, if a child asks his mother to give him some to eat, she plucks a branch or two and reverently lays one at the foot of a *mawa* tree for the spirits or at the base of some other tree, if she cannot see a *mawa*, she gives the rest to the child.

When a hunting expedition makes its first killing, part of the flesh of the animal is laid at the base of a tree as a thank offering to the spirits and in anticipation of further favors to be conferred. All such offerings are supposed by the natives to be partaken of by the spirits, though they are well aware that they do not actually diminish in quantity. There is an interesting point in this connection: any man who has acted as *mbila* (understudy) to some well-known man may appropriate these offerings. In the case of the hunting offering, he will run round the tree, saying, "I am a hyaena, the spirits will not mind me," and will then take part of the flesh-offering and eat it.

In the same way, a *mbila* may drink from a green bamboo-pot after three days, when the spirits are supposed to have taken what they want.

With the exception of the *mawa* tree above mentioned (*mbwa*, Chin.), and possibly another called *mila-ngama* (Chin.), which is never used as firewood and which is supposed to be used by women, I do not think there are any sacred trees properly so-called. Miss Werner supposes that many of the big trees (often a species of *Ficus*) in villages are sacred.[2] The truth is, I believe, simply that a village is made naturally round a big tree which conveniently offers its shade for the village meeting place. The spirits of deceased chiefs may

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 207. [2] The natives of British Central Africa, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

be supposed to live in such trees. They are nevertheless natural objects for them to occupy, in fact practically the only ones to be found in villages. Trees may accordingly, therefore, be looked upon as to some degree sacred. Almost each town enclosure or plaza of sufficient size may be planted as an offering to the spirits of the departed. But the Yao do not erect little huts in their vicinity, being absent with strips of calico as is the custom among the Anyanja.

Macdonald[1] mentions the spirits in connection with fruits and other kills round Blantyre and supposes them to be the spirits of the places themselves. This I think is unlikely; they would probably turn out to be spirits bearing the names of long departed Anyanja chiefs whom the immigrant Amangoche Yao venerated just "to be on the safe side," since they had come and taken the country which long ago belonged to the former tribe. When approaching or passing any spot held to be the dwelling place of spirits, salutation is made by clapping the hands.

Spirits of the departed may enter into animals or may take the form of animals, commonly lions and sometimes large snakes (python), but this belief is not so general among the Yao as among other tribes, in my opinion. An animal which is so possessed is called *kupaka*, from *ku-upaka*, "to be transformed."

Apart from this habitation of inanimate objects above mentioned by natives, there is nothing that points to a belief in Animism among the Yao, so far as I know. Stubborn hills, rocks, streams, lakes, nor trees have their own spirits, nor are they endowed by the native mind with life.

Deceased persons appear to the living in dreams, the native apparently believing that the deceased appears in his material body.

They believe also in revelation of wishes of the deceased through the medium of the living. The spirit of the deceased is supposed to enter into the medium. The medium, I am informed, is always a woman, never a male. From the descriptions of some of these revelations obtained, there can be no doubt that they are manifestations of hysteria epileptica. The medium works herself up into a frenzy of excitement and in her delirium gives out the name of the deceased, the voice which speaks being that of the spirit within her. She rolls on the ground and foams at the mouth, uttering the word of revelation which is generally to the effect that some deceased chief's spirit is feeling aggrieved at the neglect of his tomb; the voice may go on to say that certain practices are forbidden, or demand that certain rites be observed by the people. The spirits which possess her are generally spoken of as *mawale*, a word which, though sometimes used as equivalent to *mizimu*, usually seems to have rather a sinister significance. Insane persons are called *mawale* and are thought to be possessed by a spirit, and vague hints with *mawale* may be practised for their cure. In the case of the death of anyone who is possessed, in answer to my interrogation, I have been told that both the spirit which has entered into the man and his own *mizimu* leave his body.

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 91.

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Luemie Mimpi is the prophet of Isoma, a man of great height who walks the round of the country, stepping from hill-top to hill-top along "the fairy way," the "*Mbira wa Luemie Mimpi*," which is supposed to run right around Nyandoma and serve to mark a river, starting and ending somewhere near the junction of the Shiré with the Zambezi river. As he goes, he can be seen from a hundred miles away. He carries the bellows instrument and plays as he walks, singing:

"*Kalira* *nupe* *lungwe* *kulya mnjo* *mwanaka mwanaka ndai*"
"You cry out (in trouble) with the endless thirstiness I must roll up the maps, this season of famine!"

which might be rendered, "You people grumble about small troubles, as I will teach you to know better by inflicting great ones." When he is seen, there will be famine.

It will be convenient here to allude briefly to some of the beliefs connected with meteorological phenomena, as some of them have a bearing on native religious beliefs. The remarks made under this heading for the Anyanja hold good for the Yao. The morning and evening stars are called *Nyamalaka* and *Nyangulanga*, the good work and the bad work. They are looked upon as the two wives of the moon, one of whom leads him on well that he grows fat, the other who does not, so he wastes away. The constellation of the Pleiades is called *Nindu*; the Milky Way, *Litchipa mulira*, "the watcher of the night," when high in the heavens, down is rain. When shooting stars are seen, natives exclaim "*mapala mbeja!*" *Mapala* is a many-pointed arrow. Eclipses are recognized but no explanation is vouchsafed. Thunder is supposed to be the noise of rain falling in the heavens before it reaches the earth. The rain is sometimes supposed to be the overflowing steam from an enormous pot of water boiling over a furnace fire in heaven. The lightning is conceived as a lizard-like animal which dwells in the clouds and darts out from behind them and comes to earth and breaks up trees and may kill a man. Mica is supposed by the Yao to be its excrement. The animal is called *Njoka*, and is the same as *Mpumbo* of the Anhjanja who consider the mica to be the broken egg-shell of the lightning dragons' eggs. There is a large red compound lily, a species of *Haemanthus* also called *Njoka*, which is in some way connected with the lightning. No Yao child would ever touch this flower. Children are always advised never to seek shelter under a big tree but always to make for a bamboo thicket, for if the lightning strikes the bamboo and splits it, it will get caught inside the hollow stem.

Cubes of wood are said to evaporate from a plant called *Chongolo*. It is described as having one process like an elephant's trunk and others like two fingers. It is found on the tops of very high mountains, growing alone and surrounded by bare rock. This plant is used by medicine men to gain supernatural powers. *Chongolo* is also the name of a parasitic plant on the shea-nut trees in Nyasaland.

The world is taken by the natives as they find it; to them no explanation for its being is necessary. So far as I can find out, there is no idea among the Yao of a Creator. The

The hair of the axilla is always removed in men and women, usually by shaving but sometimes in the case of women it is dealt with as in the case of the pubic hair. A man with unshaven axillae would be laughed at and referred to as " a man carrying a fowl in his armpit." The axillary hairs are called *mandanga pa mimpanya* (*mpanya*, the armpit). 302

The pubic hair, *mandanga*, is removed by both men and women; in men by shaving, in women sometimes by shaving, but predominantly by plucking out after the application of a medicine called *mamandanga* (*ba-mam*, to pluck a fowl), which renders the operation easy. It is prepared from the juice which exudes from the bruised bark of the *mam-mandanga* tree. There is a woman at Malanyga's who has never grown any axillary or pubic hair; she is called " the rogue elephant "; a rogue elephant has no tusks. It may be noted in passing that the women has horse children. [129]

A few men have the hair round the anus shaved. Such a service can only be asked of a man's closest intimate, such as a brother-in-law. [607]

I have dealt with tattooing among the Tao in an article, as yet unpublished, on tattooing among the natives of Nyasaland.

The teeth among the Tao people are never mutilated in any way, though the Amanganja go in for small file marks at the cutting edges of the incisors. 304

The old Tao women, of whom some may still be seen, used to pierce the upper lip and wear a circular disc of wood often two inches in diameter in the hole; this is called *kapisha* (Pl. VII, fig. 4). The disc was often made of lead and sometimes of ivory. The lead might be hollowed out on the upper surface; it was then called *kapisha ka utali*. The disc caused a considerable projection of the upper lip which was much admired. A man, on the other hand, with protruding lips would be nicknamed " the warthog," *mamapindo*, and considered ill favoured. [533] 304 301

This *kapisha kakiwa* has gone out of fashion years the *shipini* or disc worn in the left ala of the nose has become more and more fashionable (Pl. II, fig. 2). Originally the *shipini* consisted of a small disc of lead not larger than a three-penny piece, which lay on the outer surface of the ala, held in place by a stem, *kashinji*, which pierced the ala and passed into the nostril. Now the fashion is to wear a very large disc, often an inch in diameter, which itself occupies a hole in the substance of the ala of the nose; it may be flat-topped and called *shipini cha vinapa* (" mushroom "), or the upper surface may often be concave, in which case it is called *shipini cha utali* (*litali*, a grain mortar). These discs are made of lead and are sometimes called *litini*, a recent word and doubtless a corruption of "lead." Others are made of ivory, which may bear some geometric pattern on the exposed surface. *A shipini* used to cost a *kati*.

Among Tao men and women, the lobule of the ear is often pierced but nothing is worn in the hole except possibly a stalk of grass.

Combs for use and for ornament are worn in the hair by both men and women. The ordinary comb without decoration is called *likwandapa*; it is made of a number of pieces 301

3: Swanson D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Tao FT7

of bamboo fastened together at one end on the flat side by binding with string, the free ends being sharpened to form the teeth of the comb. If the fastened end is ornamented with beads sewed on in patterns, the comb is called *lisemulo* (*lu-semulo*, to comb). *Lisemulo* lia *shinpembete* from *lu-pembeta*, to be sticky, is the name of a small comb worn purely for ornament. On either side of the base of this comb, pieces of wood variously shaped are glued with the sticky juice from the root of the *shinpembete* tree. In this way, a sort of inlay is produced. Pieces of tin cans are sometimes substituted for wood. Women commonly wear in their hair the small *shiwembe* knife used for tattooing and shaving.

The natives take readily to perfumes of European introduction, but previously he was not an entire stranger to the use of such unguents. *Mbuku*, the bulbous root of a kind of grass which grows near water, contains some aromatic principle which has a pleasant odor. The stem is beat around and fixed into the bulb; this is then covered with beads and slung around the neck. *Mirungwa*, the *Mlanje* cedar, is also used, as well as the fruit of a shrub called *chimpwa*. These substances are scraped into the castor oil used for anointing, and give it a pleasant odor.

No pigments are used on the body. As a sign of great rejoicing, the head and face and perhaps the whole body are covered with ashes, but the natives do not even paint the face with flour on ceremonial occasions.

Bands of beadwork are worn around the head, either as a simple band or a band finished off with a bunch in one spot, or with a tassel. Finger rings are worn made of ivory, eland hoof and horn, lead, and iron wire. There is also a great variety of bracelets and anklets, a list of which is given below.

Chipemba: made of plaited grass, worn chiefly by little girls and women who cannot afford more expensive bracelets. As many as half a dozen may be worn on the wrist.

Likongola (pl. *makongola*): single circles of solid brass, one half to three quarters of an inch in diameter, worn by women usually as anklets, one or two on each limb. They may still be seen on some of the old women, but as they cause much discomfort, they have gone out of fashion. A man used to be very proud to see his wife adorned with so much wealth and she was content to be so hobbled by her vanity. The hammering up and pulling open of the *likongola* circle in order to remove it cost a fowl.

Chilungu: a brass bracelet of small calibre; *ilungu* (pl.) signifies a spiral cylinder made from the same thick brass wire covering the entire forearm.

Likwinjili: like *chilungu* of thin brass or iron wire, worn on arms and ankles.

Ching'ande: a bracelet of fine brass wire wound round a circular core. All the brass comes from the coast.

Likoso: a large ivory bracelet worn by men and women.

Ulungu: ("stiff tail hairs of an animal"), the bracelet made of the tail hairs of the elephant or the gnu.

Lichoka: the bracelet made from elephant hoof.

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(364) is swept up, the ground round the house is hard-stamped, and the latrines demolished. Ceremonial beer is brewed by the head-wife of the chief, and after this has been drunk the ashes of the fire used in the brewing are carefully collected and taken to a meadow ("straw-ends," or "dumping of paths") where they are deposited.

(763) The chief, as representative of his people, bathes in special medicated water, a decoction made from the bark of sp'ongo and odoma, and the rest of sp'ongo.

(327) This completes the ordinary annual ceremony, at which new fire is not made.

(622) On certain special occasions a more elaborate ritual is carried out; such occasions are the death of a chief, a threatened epidemic of infectious disease, a murder (especially by shooting) and the frequent occurrence of quarrels in the village.

In such circumstances, in addition to the ordinary pygidio ceremony described above, the partridge sticks of the whole village are removed and all fires extinguished. The discarded sticks and all ashes of the old fires are carried to the meeting of paths, where the former are stuck upright in the ground and the ashes piled together; this is done in procession, all the people taking part. On their return to the village (372) new fire is made by friction by either the chief or his younger brother—usually the latter; fire procured in any other way would nullify the proceedings. Finally (763) all the people bathe in the medicated water used only by the chief at the ordinary ceremony.

951 In addition to this special form of the pygidio ceremony, another rite is sometimes
776 performed after the occurrence of a murder or as prophylactic against the spread of epidemic disease. The doctor first makes a kind of trough (tokongwo) from the bark of mbondondo or myopo, and procures a chicklide (or chipongolo) basket—used as a strainer in salt-making. Having collected his medicines he proceeds to the bank of the stream near the usual bathing-place of the village and digs a shallow hole, in which he places the basket; in this he puts the leaves of a certain thorny shrub and covers the whole with the trough, which is banked up with earth so as to be perfectly firm. He then puts his "medicines" into the trough; these are, first, the head of an iron hammer and a piece of slag, both from a smelting furnace. On top of these he puts pieces of the root of a certain tree which has many and particularly sharp thorns, and bits of bark from two trees peculiar for having very straight stems. Having distributed these evenly along the floor of the trough, he fills it with water and then proceeds to construct an arch over the end of the trough furthest from the stream. Two long poles, cut from a kind of tree particularly rich in sap, are planted in the ground, one at each side of the trough and close to it; these are bent over towards each other, and fastened together by means of a strip of their own bark. A bamboo is now planted alongside each, and similarly tied to its fellow. During all these preparations and throughout the ceremony it is essential that the doctor has no knots in any part of his clothing.

The preparations are now complete, and when all the fires in the village have been extinguished the people go in procession to the spot where the doctor awaits them. All must be nearly clad and must have no metal about them.

(622) The chief opens the ceremony. He steps into the trough and taking some of the medicated water therefrom in his hands he rinses his mouth with it. He then (769) offers a prayer to the spirits of his ancestors, first stating the emergency and detailing the measures which are to be taken to deal with it (new fire, sweeping, discard of partridge-sticks and shaving). The prayer over, he splashes the water in the trough over his body and passes through the arch, first throwing some gift (beads or, in more modern times, money) into the trough. These gifts, presumably (756) intended as an offering to the spirits, are the perquisites of the doctor, and everybody is supposed to contribute in turn.

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The men and boys now pass through the arch in order of seniority; each splashes himself with the water in the trough, but neither spreads nor rinses the mouth. The women come next, led by the head-wife of the chief; the latter rinses her mouth and, instructed by the doctor, repeats a prayer similar to that offered by her husband. The remainder of the women merely splash themselves, like the men, before passing through the arch. All then return to the village, where the *yapiche* is continued.

Finally the doctor takes the hammer-head from the trough and hands it to the chief, who rubs the left into it, and, a hoe having been placed on the ground, goes through the form of forging the latter by beating it with the hammer. He then scrapes the ground with the hoe as if clearing a place overgrown with grass; he does not dig with it as in hoeing up the ground for planting seed. After this rite the chief again hands to mediated water similar to that in the trough, and the ceremony is complete.

Whereas the *yapiche* ceremony and its adjunct, the rite of the arch, are now but rarely performed, as Yao will omit the rite of purification after a death in his family. This ceremony consists of two essential parts, both protective against the rabies, a disease characterized by dropsy and supposed to be contracted by contact with a corpse, or by association, especially by shaving a head, with those who have been in such contact. The first of these parts is bathing in certain medicines, which prevents the latter from rabies, and the second consists of a sort of communion meal, shared by all friends and especially relatives with those who have been contaminated, and designed to protect these friends and relatives.

The decoction for bathing is made by soaking the roots of *leguminosæ* and *lambertia* in water, together with the bark of *mkomeni*, one piece each from the east and west aspects of the tree; the water assumes a reddish tint, and the whole body is bathed.

The communion meal consists of porridge made from any kind of flour or of rice, and some spanish beans. To the latter some mashed and powdered root of *mtondengulelo* is mixed, with a little salt. All near relatives of the deceased must partake of this meal, as well as their wives and their near relatives; part is carefully put aside for the use of any relative unable to be present at the ceremony.

Lastly, since the spread of Islam among the WaYao, this rite has become confused with the distribution of food to the poor at the funeral of a Muslim, and the Arabic word *sadaqa* ("charity") is now generally used for it, to the exclusion of its wider, correct meaning.

It may be mentioned here that after the death of a child the father is denied access to his wife for a period of about three weeks, and the first act must be one of coitus interruptus.

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